

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicants would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided.

Upon entry of the above amendments, the Abstract will have been replaced and claim 47 will have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1-46 are currently pending, with claims 23-46 being withdrawn from consideration in a previous Official Action. Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding objection and rejection, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

Regarding Request For Interview

As discussed during the telephone conversation of February 12, 2010, and agreed to by the Examiner (Karen L. Younkins), Applicants' representative (Enoch E. Peavey) respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned to conduct an interview in the above-captioned Application, prior to issuing an Official Action, should the Examiner believe that the present Response does not place the application in condition for allowance.

Objection to the Abstract

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to the abstract for not being in proper idiomatic English. In this regard, Applicants submit that the Abstract has been replaced in order to address the Examiner's concerns.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the objection to the Abstract is believed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claim 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 for being indefinite. In this regard, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 47 is believed to be moot since this claim will have been canceled upon entry of the present Amendment.

Nevertheless, to the extent that amended claim 1 incorporates features similar to claim 47, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's above-mentioned rejection.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, Applicants submit that Figures 11, 18 and 19c of the present disclosure clearly provides support for the features recited in claim 47. For example, Applicants submit that the ***bold*** arrows in Figure 11 indicate a flow of second flow path that surrounds an outer surface of the pipe (i.e., which forms the first flow path).

Accordingly, Applicants submit that all of the features recited in amended claim 1 are fully supported by the present Disclosure.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-22 and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MATSUMOTO (U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2003/0140407) in view of HAYASHI (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,912).

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner apparently considers the spray hole 25 in MATSUMOTO to be equivalent to the presently claimed spray hole; a first flow path 27a in MATSUMOTO to be equivalent to the presently claimed first flow path and pipe; a piston 20 in MATSUMOTO to be equivalent to the presently claimed cover member; a first flow path 27b in MATSUMOTO to be equivalent to the presently claimed second flow path; and a cylindrical vortex chamber 29 in MATSUMOTO as being equivalent to the presently claimed spray member.

However, Applicants submit that the second flow path 27b in MATSUMOTO is formed linearly and parallel to the first flow path 27a. More simply put, Applicants submit that the second flow path 27b does not surround the pipe that forms the first flow path 27a.

That is, Applicants submit that the applied prior art, alone or in any properly reasoned combination, fails to disclose at least the presently claimed space between an outer surface of the pipe and an inner peripheral surface of the cover member forming a second flow path that introduces the washing water to the spray hole, wherein the second flow path is configured to surround the outer surface of the pipe in a circumferential direction of the cover member, as generally recited in amended claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection of claims 1-22 and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the arguments herein, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 2-22, Applicants assert that these claims are allowable on their own merit, as well as because they depend from independent claim 1, which Applicants have shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

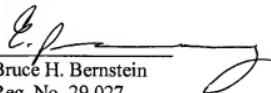
SUMMARY

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

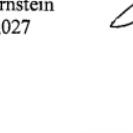
Applicants submit that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding the present response or this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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